

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE Annual Report - 2022



TOWNSHIP *of* MORRIS
EST. 1740 NEW JERSEY

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Morris Township on the Move

The Transportation Advisory Committee's purpose, powers and duties are to explore, study and make advisory recommendations regarding ways to improve travel and transportation (walking, bicycling, driving, and parking) in Morris Township*. Factors to be taken into consideration are safety, convenience, accessibility and connectivity. The committee aims to develop methods to obtain and utilize resident input and ensure residents have opportunities to ask questions, make suggestions, contribute actively, and have access to information they need to better understand various issues, situations and decisions.

The committee looks to evaluate concerns/requests regarding sidewalks, traffic calming, traffic flow, bike lanes, alternative transportation programs, public transportation, and special transportation needs. Taking all of this into account, the committee will address ways to improve transportation in each of the four major categories: walking (sidewalks and trails), bicycling (programs, routes, and pathways), driving (traffic volume, congestion and violation concerns), and parking.

*Ordinance 22-19 by the Township Committee on August 21, 2019. Chapter 9 of the Municipal Code: Article IX Transportation Advisory Committee.

2022 TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Walking Subcommittee: Cathy Wilson (Lead), Rick Bye, Alida Karas (Jan-Apr)

Biking Subcommittee: Jim Hunt (Lead), Nora Santiago, David Wilson, Jeff Grayzel (Feb-Jun)

Driving Subcommittee: DJ Curnow (lead), Dann Nunn, Tara Olivo-Moore (Jan-Aug), Donna Guariglia (Sep-Dec), Bette Simmons (Sep-Dec)

Parking Subcommittee: Dann Nunn, DJ Curnow, Tara Olivo-Moore (Jan-Aug)

Township Professionals

Township Administrator: Timothy Quinn

Township Engineer: Jim Slate

Chief of Police: Mark DiCarlo (Jan-May), Robert Shearer (June-Dec)

Director of Parks and Recreation: Bill Foelsch

Secretary: Michelle Fischer (Jan), Sarah Daher (Feb-Dec)

2022 TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

January 12, 2022 (virtual)	June 8, 2022 (virtual)
February 9, 2022 (virtual)	July 13, 2022 (hybrid)
March 9, 2022 (virtual)	September 14, 2022 (hybrid)
April 9, 2022 (virtual)	October 12, 2022 (hybrid)
May 11, 2022 (virtual)	December 14, 2022 (hybrid)

2022 TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROJECTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TAC Website

TAC recognizes a key resource for communication and information sharing is the Transportation Advisory Committee's page on the Township's website ([TAC website](#)). In 2021, TAC laid the groundwork for TAC's dedicated webpage and in 2022 the look and feel of the webpage was substantially improved. Much TAC specific information was added directly or linked to on the page. In addition, links to a wide variety of information related to TAC's mission and purpose that already existed on the Township website or was available on other public websites were added to TAC's page, thereby making it easier for interested parties to see what was available and to access it.

It is expected that improvements and additions to the TAC webpage will be an ongoing process. In order to minimize impacts on Township staff workload, TAC has adopted a practice of funneling suggestions for webpage modifications through a special website committee. This committee periodically reviews the suggestions and compiles any data, text, or graphics that might be required in a form compatible with website requirements before submitting them for incorporation on the webpage.

Complete Streets

In 2021 TAC members reviewed different complete streets policies from across the state and members worked to educate themselves on how Morris Township implements complete streets elements in its road projects. One of the primary goals for 2022 was for TAC to develop a recommendation on how Morris Township can develop a formal Complete Streets policy, customized to fit its specific needs and desires.

A TAC special subcommittee for Complete Streets consisting of DJ Curnow, Jim Hunt, Kris Ruggeri, and Cathy Wilson was formed. The first step in adopting a Complete Streets policy is for the governing body to adopt a resolution committing the Township

to forming that policy. The Complete Streets subcommittee drafted a resolution based on models from the state Department of Transportation and Sustainable Jersey and, after review and revision by TAC as a whole and by Township professionals, TAC approved it and voted to recommend that it be passed by the Township Committee. As [Resolution Mo. 148-22](#), it was approved by the Township Committee on June 15, 2023.

The subcommittee then focused on the policy itself using guidance and model policies available from the state DOT and organizations like Sustainable Jersey as a baseline to develop a Township specific policy. By year end, the committee had nearly completed a rough draft policy proposal ready for discussion and review with the Township professional staff in early 2023.

Morris Township on the Move - Bike and Walk Routes

In 2021, in cooperation with the Morris Township Police Department and the Morris Township Parks & Recreation Department, TAC sponsored a special 3-week trail event. The event promoted a safe and well-marked 5-mile trail called the Loantaka Loop ([Link](#)) around the south-eastern section of the Township with connections to many recreational activities.



In 2022, the Biking subcommittee proposed that the Loantaka Loop be made permanent and better signed. Preliminary designs for signage and roadway markings were developed and discussed and the group worked with Engineering, the Township sign shop, the DPW and the County of Morris to iron out details and required budget for implementation in 2023.

The Biking subcommittee also developed plans for a similar loop on the other side of the Township. Tentatively called the Fairchild Loop or Fairchild Connector, it is intended to include both cycling and walking routes between the Streeter Pool/Cornine Field complex and the Fairchild neighborhood and Speedwell Avenue. One of TAC's goal for 2023 is to conduct a roll out event for this like the one held for the Loantaka Loop.

Normandy Parkway Sidewalk Project Support

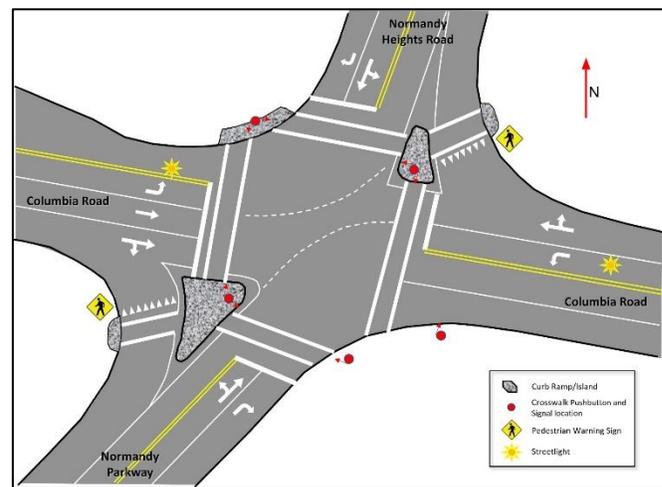
In 2022, the Township completed its plans for the Normandy Parkway Road Resurfacing project and submitted them to the state Department of Transportation and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The plans include a sidewalk running along the north side of the road between Kenilworth Road and Columbia Road. After its initial review, SHPO expressed some concerns about putting in a sidewalk through the Normandy Parkway Historic District and asked for more information.

TAC wrote a letter of support for the project that was included in the Township’s packet sent to SHPO. The letter stated the proposed sidewalk will vastly improve connectivity among key destinations (parks, recreation, museums, and public transit) in the northeast section of Morris Township. Furthermore, TAC noted that the project is entirely consistent with goals and specific recommendations incorporated in the Township Master Plan dating back to at least 2000 and supported, more recently, by the results of TAC’s Mobility Survey.

Walk Audit - Columbia Road and Normandy Parkway

The proposal by the Township to install sidewalks connecting the intersection of Columbia Road and Normandy from the south along the west side of Normandy Parkway and from the north along the west side of Normandy Heights Road made pedestrian safety at this intersection a subject of public concern.

To identify options for improving pedestrian safety at this intersection, a walk audit of the intersection was conducted. Participants spent nearly an hour and a half walking every leg of this intersection; assessing current conditions/concerns; and discussing a range of options for improving pedestrian safety.



The Columbia Rd-Normandy Parkway Intersection

The results of the audit were shared with the public via the Township’s website ([Report link](#)) and sent directly to various stakeholders including: the Township’s governing body (who are the decision makers on whether to proceed with the sidewalk proposal); the Township’s Engineer and Administrator; the Township’s TAC and HPC; the County’s Engineer; and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) - which has been involved in evaluating the sidewalk proposal.

The audit was helpful in clarifying existing conditions/concerns at this intersection and identifying a full range of safety improvement possibilities for future discussion and consideration. It also served as a learning exercise for future TAC efforts of this type. Among other things, it was noted that many of the issues and concerns had been considered by the Township’s engineers and addressed in the Normandy Parkway Resurfacing Project plan and that a representative of the engineering office should be included in future walk audits.

EDAC Support

Morris Township's Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) has been working on a study of the Madison Avenue Corridor to assist the Township, local businesses, and residents be better prepared for potential future development proposals along the Corridor.

After surveying residents and businesses along the Madison corridor, EDAC shared their preliminary results and asked for input from other Township advisory committees, including TAC.

EDAC's survey results were consistent with its 2020/2021 Mobility Survey results in that respondents expressed similar concerns about traffic and safety for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers and desired improvements in walkability, accessibility, and connectivity. In its response to EDAC, TAC included a statement of strong support for these kinds of improvements, noting that they have been a part of the Township's Master Plan since 2007. Specific recommendations from TAC were:

- Fill sidewalk gaps between Madison Ct and Punch Bowl Rd
- Consider Madison Ave crosswalk near Pitney Pl for bus stop access
- Longer term: extend Madison Ave sidewalk network eastward from Crescent Dr/Barberry Rd, add Madison Ave bike lanes



Community Involvement

A key task for the Transportation Advisory Committee is to “Develop methods to obtain and utilize resident input and ensure residents have opportunities to ask questions, make suggestions, contribute actively, and have access to information they need to better understand various issues, situations and decisions.”

One means of addressing this task has been to include updates on existing upcoming and ongoing projects from Engineering, Parks and Recreation, and the Police Department as a regular feature on our monthly meetings. These give both TAC members and members of the public who may be sitting in on the meetings (either in person or via Zoom) the opportunity to learn about, question, and comment on Township transportation related activities.

In addition to the relatively brief regular updates, TAC requested more detailed reviews of several projects in 2022, including the Normandy Parkway Road Resurfacing Project and the Walnut Street Road Reconstruction Project. These more detailed reviews were

planned and scheduled ahead of time allowing TAC to do some community outreach in an attempt to boost awareness. The Township already works with neighborhoods affected by proposed projects in developing specific plans and notifies interested parties once a plan has been drafted; these TAC reviews are intended to make the plans aware to a broader group of people and, ideally, to provide more community input at an earlier stage.